

Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council. Community Connection, February, 2016.

Having just become Chairman of our Bressingham and Fersfield Parish Council, it seemed a good idea that I should write a monthly piece for our excellent website. One reason will be to keep everyone in touch, as far as possible, with the things that affect us all, and also to try to be a little more pro-active and united in a 'joined-up' approach to the things we would like to happen.

As you know, parish councils have comparatively limited powers in terms of statutory duties, but we are listened to by those agencies that do exercise more 'muscle', and we can act as a communication medium. We are in regular contact with South Norfolk District Council (they look after, for example, housing and refuse collection) and Norfolk County Council (who control issues including highways and social care): our aim must be to bring together as necessary everyone concerned with the care of our community and environment.

Existing issues which call for our attention at present include the condition of our roads and verges: both in terms of individual sites and the overall impression they give. Verges take a real hammering, both through the need for heavy vehicles to use our narrow lanes – and to pass traffic from the opposite direction – and by being dug up, along with the roads, for such things as cable trenching. There will be more about the latter and 'reinstatement' in due course. One eyesore is the state of the verge at the entrance to Fersfield churchyard. With co-operation between the county highways, our Parish and Fersfield Parochial Church Councils, and the hard work of a local farmer, we hope shortly to improve conditions at this bottleneck. A grant to help this has been applied for. On the subject of 'putting things right', I have had an assurance from the new owner of a bungalow at the centre of Bressingham, in High Road, that the site will be cleared in the next three weeks or so.

It is excellent to be able to finish these notes positively. We look forward to the 'Anglia in Bloom' initiative possibly to be observed in our villages. (Please note this does not involve individual gardens, but is a corporate event, and the judges will 'drive round' both our villages, looking at the overall standard. It would be jolly nice if some front gardens had a visible feature such as a 'planted' wheelbarrow.) The entry fee will be paid for centrally. I understand there is a programme of interesting events, and the 'launch' takes place at Blooms on 12 April. Then we have our own 'Blooming Bressingham and Fragrant Fersfield' open gardens weekend of 25 – 26 June. As you know, our medieval parish churches are in need of some rather expensive care – and as valuable buildings with a community function as well as religious and great historical importance, we need to care for them for ourselves and future generations. The 'open gardens' weekend will help finance these village treasures, and also make some funding available to our Village Hall. We are grateful to all those preparing to organise, sponsor and participate in this exciting weekend. There will much more information published as we approach the Spring and Summer.

We all wish every success to the 'Afternoon Club' coming to the Village Hall this month: this really is a splendid community development which I hope we will all support. Finally, I know you will all join me in thanking Jan de la Salle, our outgoing Chairman, for all her dedication and excellent work on our behalf. We give Jan & Tony our very best wishes for the future. If you wish to correspond with the Parish Council on any matter, you will find contact details on the website's [Parish Council page](#).

With our very best wishes to everyone,

Richard.